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ABSTRACT

Most of the middle schools in Belgium are 2-year schools that form a link between the 6 years of elementary education and the last 4 years of secondary education. In Flanders they are regarded as an example of the more global reform of the secondary educational system in a comprehensive sense. First, this document outlines the new system of secondary education as it took shape in the beginning of the 1970s, thereby focusing on the first 2 years--the so-called observation stage. It then sketches the development of renewed secondary education and the current situation. In this connection the document deals with the middle school and the innovation strategy that followed. Thirdly, a report is given of the research so far carried out. As appears from this contribution, the changes in and the adoption of the new educational structure have not always led to a new school structure and a new school culture. In general, the movement toward moderate comprehensiveness has had only a limited effect on the behavior of the teachers; there are more indications of effects on the school career of the students. Included are 22 references, 4 tables, and 2 figures. (Author/RG)

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DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWED SECONDARY EDUCATION

IN BELGIUM

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COMPREHENSIVE SECONDARY EDUCATION AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN BELGIUM

Jan Van Damme

2

Abstract

Most of the middle schools in Belgium are two-year schools that form a link between the six years of elementary education and the last four years of secondary education. In Flanders they are regarded as an example of the more global reform of the secondary educational system in a comprehensive sense.

First I shall outline the new system of secondary education as it took shape in the beginning of the 1970s, thereby focusing on the first two years - the so-called observation stage. I shall then sketch the development of renewed secondary education and the current situation. In this connection I shall deal with the middle school and the innovation strategy that was followed. Thirdly a report will be given of the research so far carried out.

As appears from this contribution, the changes in and the adoption of the new educational structure have not always led to a new school structure and a new school culture. In general, the movement towards moderate comprehensiveness has had only a limited effect on the behaviour of the teachers; there are more indications of effects on the school career of the students.

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The Beginnings of Renewed Secondary Education

Largely inspired by the French, and influenced by the decisions of the Düsseldorf meeting of the Council of Europe in 1968, the Belgian government (christian democrats and socialists) in 1971 laid down legal foundation for Renewed Secondary Education (R.S.E., now called S.E., type I).

Considering the high degree of pedagogical autonomy of the different educational systems (public education organized by the

State, the provinces and the municipalities and private education organized mainly by the Catholic church), it was decided simply to outline the new structure. It was also specified that the traditional educational system (now called S.E., type II) could for the time being be maintained. Characteristic of the traditional system is the strict separation from the first year on between "general" (academic) education on the one hand and technical (theoretical and practical) and vocational (practical) education on the other hand. As a rule, general education and technical (and vocational) education have traditionally been organized in separate schools - usually segregated for boys and girls.

The main objectives of R.S.E. are: to provide all students with a broader basic education, to postpone the choice of specialization and to make it more dependent on the individual aptitudes and interests of the students than on their socio-economic background, as well as to make it easier to switch from one form of education to another. In view of these objectives, a new structure was set up and curricular and didactic reforms were introduced.

Educational Structure

Figure 1

The new structure is represented in figure 1.

There are three two-year stages: the observation, the orientation and the determination stage. From the second stage onwards there are two streams :

- the transition stream (general, technical and art education) whose first priority is to prepare students for higher education, while leaving them the option of entering an active working career in a less specialized function;
- the qualification stream (technical, art and vocational education, "short" qualification at the end of the second stage and "long" qualification at the end of the third stage) whose first priority is the entry into a career while allowing students the option of continuing their studies in higher education.

The first stage, or observation phase, includes "A" - a first, mainly common, year, directed towards observing the specific abilities and interests of the students- and "B", a parallel first year, intended for students whose basic education suffers from serious gaps. In the second year there is, beside the programme which prepares for a general and technical education, a vocational preparation year which is preliminary to the structurally unintegrated vocational S.E.

3

Curriculum and Didactics

As regards the curriculum, I shall restrict myself to the first stage. For the first year "A", the Dutch-speaking state school system opted for a completely common programme, which also includes "technical activities" as a general subject. The French-speaking state schools and the Catholic schools offered all the students a number of "activités d'essai" (experimental activities) such as Latin, Technology and Art, and also a limited choice of complementary activities (arts and crafts, sports, etc.). There is always the possibility of remedial lessons and for the main subjects there is one hour a week of differential teaching. In most programmes some traditional subjects were changed for interdisciplinary activities, especially in the French-speaking region. The programming of social studies in the Dutch-speaking state schools was also an innovation. In the first year "B", the emphasis lies on remedial curricula for the mother tongue and mathematics.

In the second common year, students take, as well as a common package of about 25 periods, one or more elective packages (7 to 9 periods). The most important electives are : Latin, Greek, Science, social and economic sciences, Art and technical subjects (various possibilities). In the year preparatory to vocational education the students are prepared for two or more educational fields.

The above makes clear that the observation stage, in comparison with traditional education, gives a very broad basic schooling,

gradually become an important characteristic of R.S.E. However, this has not generally been achieved. If electives are provided, the schools tend to form classes on the basis of the elective chosen. In some schools, especially those with a very heterogeneous student body, classes are formed which are only moderately heterogeneous. For a short time there was some experimentation with setting for the main subjects, but this was discontinued for organizational reasons.

Many of the schools which have opted for heterogeneous classes, including (as exception) in the second year, use forms of differentiation within the classes. Some of the most frequently occurring forms are that the classes are split into two in the main subjects for one hour a week and some of the students receive remedial lessons. If there is differentiation within the classroom it is mostly on the basis of students' performance in that particular subject. Sometimes, however, students are able to choose a couple of periods a week from a range of activities according to their particular interests. The many middle schools that use a system of differentiation in the classroom usually also work in a learner-centered way and provide study guidance. However, the possibilities for this and differentiating in the classroom are often limited by financial considerations.

Many schools have developed forms of formative evaluation and have extended this to the non-cognitive aspects of the students' personality. However, in state education in particular, there has been a return to the traditional evaluation procedure with a limited number of exams and quantitative marking.

Before concluding this overview of the developments that have taken place by discussing the strategy of innovation that has been followed, I should like to mention that in the 1980s the vocational S.E. was also renewed both pedagogically and didactically. This happened together with the raising of the school-leaving age (full time education until 15 or - for those who did not do the first two years of S.E.- 16, and part-time education until 18) and also with the development of new forms of part-time education.

It is clear that the introduction of R.S.E. is a large-scale multidimensional educational reform. Taking that into account, and considering the early lack of consensus, it is not surprising that in the beginning objectives were relatively vague and only became concrete slowly and in part. An illustration of this is that at the beginning of the reforms there was no vision covering the whole of the six years. It is also striking that the reform of S.E. did not go hand in hand with a timely reform of related sectors. Thus the absence of a revised teacher training programme and a change in the administrative structures - both in the Ministry and in the National Secretariat of Catholic Education - was clearly experienced as an obstacle to the renewal. The coordination of the reform of S.E. and elementary education also remained limited. As regards the reform of S.E. itself, the emphasis clearly lay on structural renewal and far less on the pedagogical-didactic aspects, or content renewal. Perhaps the fact that outside change agents were only gradually provided and that part-time internal school change agents were only appointed from 1980, has something to do with this. This last measure, together with the provision of class councils and local subject groups, has led to an evolution in school organization and in the approach of the external change agents, characterized by a shift from the adoption to the implementation perspective.

As regards innovation strategy there are clear differences between the state and the Catholic education system. In the state system, the reform was carried out very bureaucratically. The education minister decided which schools would adopt the new structure and the education department determined what kind of in-service training (which began some years after the reform itself) would be organized, which was compulsory for all the teachers concerned to attend. Almost every new Minister of Education added his part to the discontinuity in the renewal programme.

As for the Catholic education system, on the Flemish side especially there was great hesitation among the policy-making bodies. The choice of a gradual implementation strategy was no

doubt connected with this. It immediately provided the advantage that only the schools that wanted to, adopted the new structure. The agreement of a majority of the teachers, for example, was also necessary. Only those schools that worked together - later also within a regional group - were permitted to take part. At first the dynamism came from those schools that were reforming themselves, and a small number of external change agents. This team of change agents has gradually evolved into a group of expert innovation consultants, but other bodies such as the inspectorate seemed to be either neutral or opposed to the reform process.

2

The Evaluation Research

Almost no research has been carried out into the running of middle schools in this country. Middle schools, at least in Catholic education, are a recent phenomenon, and the attention of the researchers has been directed in particular to the renewal of S.E. as a whole. Only a small amount of research work into R.S.E. has been carried out in the framework of a comparison between the old and the new system. The rapid general spread of the new system has made such research of little use or even impossible. Some research was done by, or commissioned by, the governing bodies. This was the case particularly for Catholic schools and to a lesser extent in the French-speaking Ministry of Education. This meant that in Flanders some interim reports containing results of questionnaires were published (e.g. Pedagogisch Bureau, 1977). At a later stage information was gathered about the school career of R.S.E.-students from the school administrations (e.g. Dienst voor statistiek, 1986). In Wallonia there was regular cooperation with the Catholic University of Louvain (U.C.L.) as can be seen in the recent comprehensive investigation (Bureau Pédagogique, 1986). The authorities of the French-speaking state school system requested the Free University of Brussels (U.L.B.) to carry out a survey of the way students in the top classes experienced school life in R.S.E. (Pirson & Pirson - De Clercq, 1979).

On the initiative of the universities, research was made into a

variety of aspects but without much coordination. A collection of research papers with reference to R.S.E. was compiled by the Study Group for Educational Policy and School Consultancy of the Catholic University of Leuven (Studiegroep voor Onderwijsbeleid, 1982).

I will first mention briefly the most important research work concerning the system of R.S.E. as a whole. I wish to distinguish two large areas where the research has been concentrated: the implementation of R.S.E. by the teachers and the effects of renewal on the participation in education of the students and their educational career. After this I shall direct my attention to the research dealing with the first stage.

3

Implementation Research

It appears from the research done by outside bodies that the implementation of renewal in the different language communities and school systems has only been partially achieved. An illustration of this is the research done by Verhoeven (1982) in the Catholic schools for girls in Flanders. He investigated to what extent teachers from R.S.E. and from the traditional S.E., appreciated and put into practice the reforms proposed on the pedagogical-didactic and interactional level. He came to the conclusion that the objectives of the renewal were not generally appreciated. In general terms it seemed that 30% of the R.S.E. teachers were negative about the new goals, in contrast with 65% of the teachers from the traditional S.E. One of the least accepted goals was teaching mixed ability classes. The achievement of the goals in classroom and school generally also left a lot to be desired, especially in the higher years. The new structure does not seem to have led to any fundamental differences in behaviour on the part of the teachers in the classroom or at school generally. From the research carried out in French-speaking Catholic schools (De Ketele, 1976) and state schools (Van Haacht, 1978) it appears that the reforms were only partially appreciated and implemented.

One element of explanation is almost certainly the innovation strategy which has been followed: it would seem that teachers

found this gave them in general insufficient help. However, there are some bright spots: it appeared from the research into the Dutch-language Catholic schools that the teachers were relatively positive over the subject meetings which were held in connection with the preparation strategy (Vandenberghe, 1982).

3

Effects on the School Career

A second series of researches tried to provide an answer to the question as to how far the introduction of the new educational structure had influenced the participation in education and educational chances of different groups of students. Some of this research made a comparison between the renewed and traditional S.E. However, most of it was concerned only with the renewed S.E.

Nizet (1976) showed that in the province of Luxemburg the type of education did not play an important role in the choice of school by different social groups. The differences that were noticed as regards the social composition of the population of both types were much more connected with the fact that schools with a specific recruitment changed over to R.S.E.

Concerning the participation of students in the different forms of education (general, technical, vocational) it would appear that there has been a shift in some school systems. It was found that the number of students in technical education had decreased in comparison with general and vocational education (Kultuurraad voor de Nederlandse Cultuurgemeenschap, 1975; Bureau Pédagogique, 1986). The common first years of R.S.E., combined with other factors, are seen as a possible explanation. It appears from the research of Stinissen (1986-87) that the intended rapprochement between general and technical education has taken place reasonably well in the R.S.E. In the traditional S.E., there are large differences in ability between the groups of students who complete their studies in general and technical education. These differences seem to be smaller in R.S.E. and this is the result of a twofold change: R.S.E. allows larger groups of less gifted students to follow the final year of general education but also succeeds in attracting a group of relatively gifted students to

the more demanding options in technical education.

Brutsaert and Cooreman (1978) showed in their research among the final-year students in general education from 17 Flemish schools, that R.S.E. has played a part in the fact that girls have the same academic expectations and that they achieve the same educational standard as boys. They confirmed, moreover, that the achievements attained in elementary school in R.S.E. have a greater influence on the later educational position than do those in traditional education. Nevertheless, S.E.S. has an important effect on the school career. In more recent longitudinal research in connection with four Catholic schools, Brutsaert (1986) reaches somewhat different conclusions. He confirms once again that in R.S.E. school achievements have a greater effect on the standard reached in education than in the traditional S.E., but in contrast with earlier research he now finds that the effect of S.E.S. on the final position attained in the S.E. and also on the aspirations for further studies, is less in R.S.E. than in the traditional S.E.

Research into students attaining first year university qualifications (where only the educational background of the students at secondary school level was known) initially produced contradictory results: sometimes in favour of R.S.E., usually in favour of traditional S.E. Later on, the subjects chosen rather than the type of S.E. were considered to be of determining importance (De Neve, 1985).

The research into R.S.E., without making a comparison with the traditional system, showed among other things that :

- in general secondary education there were no differences between boys and girls as regards subjects chosen. In technical and vocational education, however, there were typically male and female specialization choices (Bureau Pédagogique, 1986);
- the subjects chosen in the final year of general education are related to the interests of the students as measured at the beginning of secondary education. This applies less to technical and vocational education (Van Damme, 1982);
- the initial study achievements are an important predictor of the student's school career, nevertheless S.E.S. has a fairly strong effect on this career (Billiet and Nizet, 1974; Van

Damme, 1982; Van Haecht, 1985). Moreover, Billiet and Nizet found that the advice as to which option to choose, given by the school, was based on S.E.S.

- relatively many careers experience some kind of difficulty. The number of students who are delayed in reaching the end of S.E. or who during S.E. after a failure change the form of education, the area of study or school, remains large (Bureau Pédagogique, 1985; Van Damme, 1985.)

What is most striking is that we can see from the different research reports in R.S.E., study achievements in primary as well as during secondary education play an important part in the curriculum allocation, but this does not rule out the effect of S.E.S on the school career. In the educational field it seems that the ideology of results overshadows the idea of equal opportunity.

3

Research into the first grade

The research results connected with the first stage provide many arguments for the promoters of middle schools who wish to recruit a heterogeneous group of students, offer them a broad basic education in heterogeneous classes, reduce the failure rate within the first stage and advise the students as objectively as possible about their choice of area of study. These objectives do not seem to have been realized in general in R.S.E. It appears that many schools have not been able to attract a really heterogeneous public but tend to recruit according to the type of education they offer in the higher stages (Nizet, 1976; Van Damme, 1982).

The supporters of the middle school often plead for a first stage in which students can progress unhindered. In R.S.E. as it is now, for many students this is not the case. In the French-language Catholic education system, more than 20% of the students from the first year "A" are not admitted to the second common year, and 12-13% of the students repeat year "A" (Bureau Pédagogique, 1985). This happens considerably less frequently in the

Flemish education system (Dienst voor statistiek, 1986). As regards the kind of students who follow the different electives in the second year, it would seem that the overall study results, the general ability level and S.E.S. are the most important differential variables; specific aptitudes and interests are of secondary importance (Van Damme, 1982).

It has not yet been investigated to what extent the research results I have outlined also apply to the middle schools. Some of these schools appear to have succeeded better in realizing the basic principles of R.S.E. (e.g. Schodts, 1986).

2

The final considerations

First some reflections in connection with the research carried out and its place in educational policy can be seen from the overview, very little overall evaluation research has been undertaken. The governing bodies of the school systems have taken hardly any initiatives in this, mostly because the reform was not seen as an experiment but more as a general new structure for the S.E. which needed pushing through. Only in a very few cases do policy documents refer to research results, and these are results obtained from internal process-oriented research. Where research results are used, it is mostly to legitimate steps that have been taken. For teams of consultants, pressure groups and public opinion, it would seem that the research has far greater significance. In the area of public opinion, statistics about the chances of obtaining first year university qualifications seemed to be particularly important. This was so even though these data could hardly ever lead to substantiated conclusions about the quality of the different forms of S.E., because of lack of information about the type of student recruited by, for example, R.S.E. or traditional S.E.

With regard to the innovation strategy which has been followed, it has already been stressed that in the state education system a bureaucrat approach was used. The Catholic education system has gradually changed from a strategy aimed at adoption to one showing increased attention for

that a remedial programme is provided in the first year, and that already in the second year - beside the structural splitting of vocational S.E. - there is a limited but important possibility of choice in the common programme.

As regards the didactic approach there are more learner-centered teaching methods and permanent evaluation, in which quantitative marking is replaced by grading. Teachers are expected to take the attitudes of the students into account in their evaluation. It was found increasingly desirable to avoid ability grouping and to form heterogeneous classes.

2 The Evolution of Renewed Secondary Education and the Present Situation

Educational Structure

The transition from the traditional to the new educational structure has taken very different forms in the different language areas and educational systems. In Wallonia (French and German-speaking) R.S.E. has been introduced in almost all schools, most rapidly in the state school system and somewhat slower in other schools. In Flanders (Dutch-speaking) the renewal only happened slowly in Catholic schools and after speeding up in about 1980, came to a standstill. In the Flemish state schools the new structure was, after being changed in a more traditional direction, imposed on all schools in 1975 by the conservative Minister of Education then in power. The present situation is given in Table 1.

Table 1

The different evolution of the educational renewal in Flanders and Wallonia can be related to the social differences between these regions. Wallonia is in many areas more directed towards egalitarianism, as can be seen in the relatively strong position

of the socialists in politics and in the trade unions. Possibly, Wallonia's inclination to look to France has also played a part in this. Another factor has undoubtedly been that Catholic schools, which from the beginning were rather apprehensive about the renewal, felt threatened in Wallonia - where they are not in a position of power - by the general introduction of the renewal in state schools.

In Catholic Flanders there was a period when the general introduction of R.S.E. was expected. Due to the economic crisis and its effects on the budget and because of changes in the social climate a polarization has grown up between renewed and traditional schools, in which the renewed schools have been forced to take a rather defensive position. The directors of the Catholic education system hope to change this situation by introducing a moderate form of R.S.E. in 1988 into all their schools.

3

Middle Schools

Traditionally, general and technical education took place in different schools, and we can ask to what extent the school structures were changed to suit the new educational structure. On this point not much has been changed during the first phase in Wallonia. In Flanders, from 1971 onwards the council schools of Antwerp have been radically changed into autonomous middle schools (offering the first stage) and upper schools (offering the second and third stages). In Flemish state education middle schools were systematically started from 1976 onwards, offering in some cases a first, in others a first and a second stage. In doing this, they could link up with a tradition of three-year "écoles moyennes", which had existed since the 19th century beside the six-year "athenea", as a short programme providing secondary education.

For further development, from 1980 a national arrangement of rationalization and planning was implemented: its purpose was to remove the discrepancies in educational opportunity and to promote the fullest possible growth of the educational system in every region. Small schools were to be closed or combined and the larger schools were allowed to split up. Schools were stimulated

to organize themselves into so-called centres of education, i.e. groups of schools joined together to organize not only general but also technical and vocational education. In this perspective of rationalization and planning, the middle schools came into being through the transformation of smaller schools, the splitting of large schools and by reorganizing the educational possibilities within a centre of education. Table 2 gives some information about the number of middle schools at this moment; only the schools which have fully adopted the R.S.E. system have been included in the Table.

Table 2

From the Table it appears that in French-speaking Belgium, especially in the official education system, middle schools (called "lycées" in the official system, "degrés d'observation autonomes" in the Catholic system) have been established, but not to the same extent as in Flanders. This applies mainly to smaller schools in country districts or administrative splitting of six-year schools.

If the middle school is to achieve one of its main purposes - to offer vocational guidance to the students that is as objective as possible - then it is imperative that it organize a wide range of educational possibilities. Table 3 shows the range as regards the observation stage in the middle schools from the three large systems with a relatively large number of middle schools. In discussing the electives of the second common year, I have restricted myself to three groups : classical (Latin and Greek), modern (sciences, social and economic sciences) and technical.

Table 3

It can be seen from the Table that in the middle schools of the Dutch-language state education, the first grade was already very fully developed in 1979-80. (No doubt this situation has changed somewhat since the rationalization measures were implemented.) The present middle schools of the Catholic education system are

less fully developed: quite a high percentage have only general or only technical electives. In the French-speaking area it is clearly a question of splitting up the unilateral six-year schools, where it is difficult to expect that the students would be objectively guided in their choices.

Analogous conclusions can be arrived at if the relationship between the middle schools (with only the first stage) and the upper schools is investigated, as can be seen for the Dutch-language Catholic education system in figure 2. Eleven of the 69 middle schools are committed to one upper school with unilateral choice (either general or technical and vocational education). Because of their unfavourable situation they lose to a great extent their pedagogical significance. It can also be seen from figure 2 that ten of the middle schools are geographically isolated. Except for some regions in Wallonia where small schools have a positive image, it seems that many parents feel very little for an isolated two-year school.

Figure 2

To conclude this section on the school structure, I would like to mention that a large number of the middle schools in the Dutch-language Catholic education system - together with some non-autonomous first stages in the multilateral schools - have formed an active association to promote the idea of the middle school. Their activities, among others, take the form of a yearly congress where they are working on the pedagogical development of middle schools (see Studiegroep Autonome Middenscholen, 1986). Middle schools are structurally more strongly developed in the state school system, but one has the impression that culturally speaking they are being given more shape through a minority group in the Catholic education system - at any rate in Flanders. As regards the six-year schools and the upper schools, I shall simply say that many of these schools have also become multilateral in the sense that they offer not only general but also one or more technical options or vice versa. Apart from that,

there are many schools - e.g. all state schools - which together with the introduction of R.S.E. have also become coeducational.

3

Curriculum and Didactics

As regards the curriculum, some changes have appeared in the traditional direction. This can be illustrated by considering the current syllabuses for the first year "A", which are included in Table 4.

Table 4

The syllabus of the state education system has been changed since the period when R.S.E. began. From the first year, electives were provided, and in the French-language state education system - which since 1981 has been administered by a conservative minister - students can begin S.E. without taking any technical subject. For that matter, the Dutch-language Catholic education system would also like to have the possibility of electives in the first year, starting in 1988. With only one exception, the limited attempts to integrate subjects into broader study areas were not continued. For the main subjects, curricula are generally available that make a distinction between a minimum programme that should be followed by all students, and an extra programme for quicker students.

With regard to the pedagogical-didactic aspects of the reform, I shall now discuss the classroom composition, the related forms of differentiation, and the evaluation procedures. First, we should remember that, in the first stage, a limited form of external differentiation is provided: 10 to 15% of the students follow the first year "B" and one out of four students studies the year preparatory to vocational education.

The formation of heterogeneous classes in the first year has

implementation, but now in Flanders a great deal of energy is being spent trying to overcome the polarization which has grown there.

As for the reform itself, it should be clear that the emphasis was laid on the changes in the educational structure and that to a lesser though increasing extent the pedagogical-didactic activities of the teachers and the school organization were considered. The importance of the school structure has not always been given enough attention and the discussion about the school curriculum content still needs to get underway. The manner in which reform of the S.E. has been implemented should be seen against the background of the Belgian educational policy where party politics, community (Flemish-Walloon) and sectarian (official-Catholic) concerns are still decisive. The extremely limited discussion between the state and Catholic education bodies in connection with the reform of S.E. is only one illustration of this.

An innovation expert cannot but observe with amazement how quickly a complicated educational reform was put into general practice, notwithstanding this - or perhaps thanks to this. That the most important general effect is only on the educational structural level does not diminish the fact that in many schools a great change has also taken place in the school organization and teaching methods. As for the future, we can expect that the limited comprehensivization of structures and content which was opted for at the beginning of the 1970s will continue. It seems unlikely that the school structures and the school culture will adapt very rapidly, and even less likely that comprehensivization will increase. What is needed is a fundamental consideration of the social function of education but this is exactly what we do not at present find in Belgium.

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Table 1. - Number of schools per type of secondary education

Type	School system			
	Public			Private
	State	Provincial	Municipal	
Dutch-speaking community				
Renewed (type I)	313	15	74	228
Traditional (type II)	2	3	3	308 ^a
In the process of adopting R.S.E.	-	13	8	147
French and German-speaking communities				
Renewed (type I)	221	50	53	392
Traditional (type II)	-	1	22	24
In the process of adopting R.S.E.	-	5	7	2

Notes. Data provided by the statistical services of the Dutch and French-speaking Ministries of Education.

^a Incl. 54 schools which reformed only their vocational educational sector.

Table 2. - Number of Renewed schools according to the stages they offer

Stages	School system			
	Public			Private
	State	Provincial	Municipal	
Dutch-speaking community				
1st stage	109	3	24	74
1st + 2nd stage	55	1	3	10
2nd + 3rd stage	137	4	13	53
1st + 2nd + 3rd stage	12	7	34	91
French and German-speaking communities				
1st stage	11	6	1	79
1st + 2nd stage	45	2	6	5
2nd + 3rd stage	13	6	1	84
1st + 2nd + 3rd stage	151	36	44	224

Notes. Situation 1986-87. Data provided by the statistical services of the Dutch and French-speaking Ministries of Education. Two schools offering only the 2nd or the 3rd stage have been deleted.

Table 3. - The internal structure of the middle schools

	Language community School system		
	Dutch-speaking State ^a	Catholic ^b	French-speaking Catholic ^b
N (%)	199(100)	74(100) ^c	83(100)
First year			
Year "A" and year "B"	195(98,0)	56(75,7)	57(68,7)
Year "A" only	4(2,0)	16(21,6)	25(30,1)
Year "B" only	-	1(1,4)	1(1,2)
Second year			
Common and preparatory to vocational education	186(93,5)	56(75,7)	53(63,9)
Common year only	13(6,5)	18(24,3)	28(33,7)
Year preparatory to vocational education only	-	-	2(2,4)
Electives in 2nd common year			
Classical, modern and technical	153(76,9)	48(64,9)	29(35,8)
Modern (or classical) and technical	27(13,6)	9(12,2)	16(19,8)
(Classical and) modern	15(7,5)	15(20,3)	30(37,0)
Technical	4(2,0)	2(2,7)	6(7,4)

Notes. ^a Situation 1979-80. If a school has more than one location, each location is considered separately.

^b From : Werkgroep Convergentie (1980).

Situation 1985-86. Counted on the basis of the 1986 yearbooks of the National Secretariat of Catholic Education.

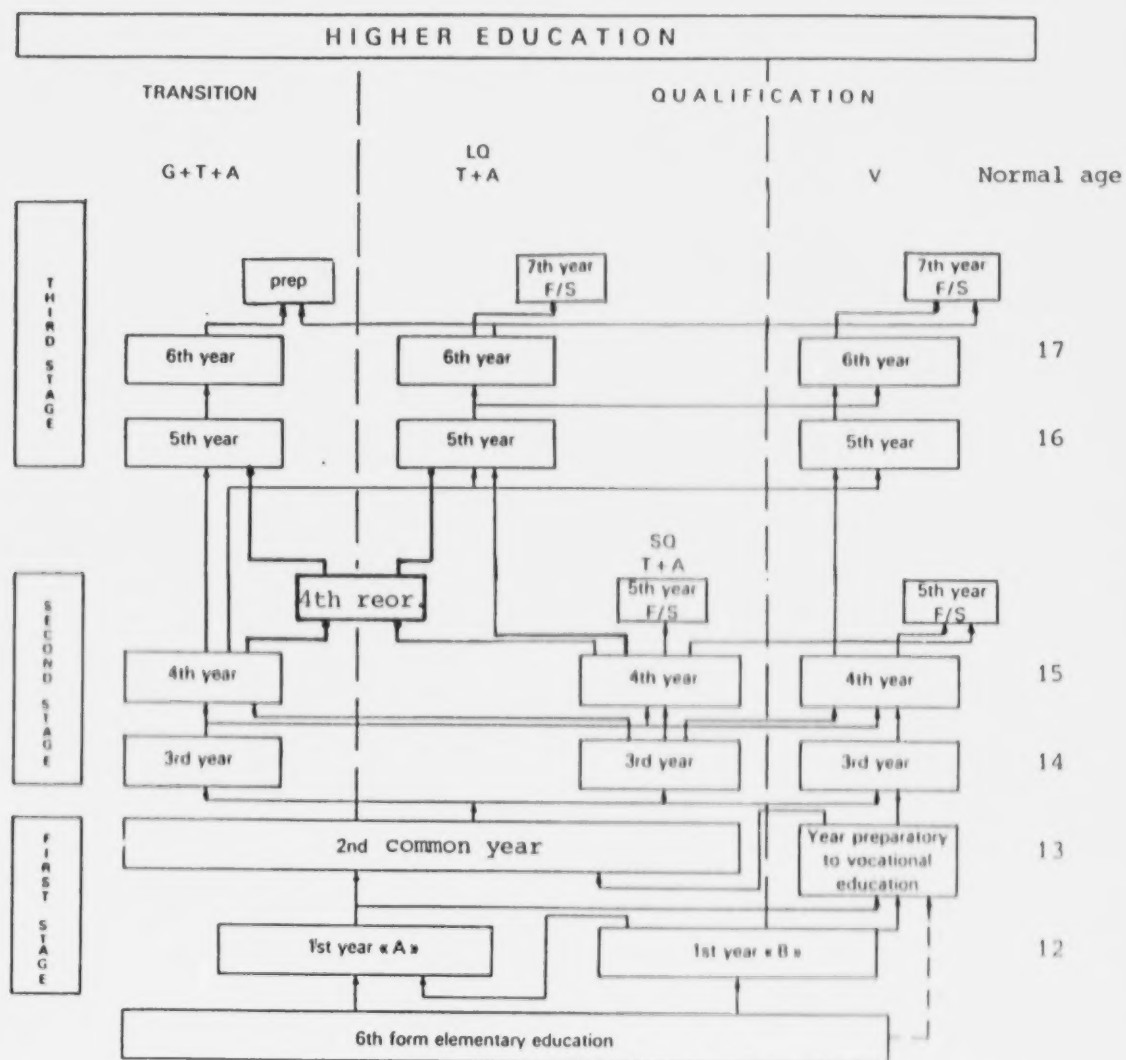
^c One school has no first year.

Table 4. - Syllabus of the first year "A"

Subjects	Language community School system			
	Dutch-speaking State	Catholic	French-speaking State	Catholic
Common	number of periods per week (50 minutes)			
Religion/ethics	2	2	2	2
Mother language	4	5	5	5
Second language	3	4	4	3
Third language	3	-	-	-
Mathematics	5	4	4	4
Biology/sciences	1	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2	} 3 ^a
History	2	1	2	
Music	1	1	} 2	1
Plastic arts	2	1		1
Technology	2	3	-	2
Physical Education	3	2	3	3
Latin	-	2	-	2
Electives	2 ^b	-	6 ^c	-
Complementary activities ^d	-	3	-	4
Remedial teaching	0 to 2	0 to 2	0 to 2	0 to 2

- Notes. ^a Study of the environment (integrating several subjects).
^b Latin or Technology or Sciences.
^c Latin and/or Mother language and/or Economics and/or Technology.
^d e.g. sport, arts and crafts.

Figure 1.-Diagram of the Secondary Educational System - Type I
(Renewed Secondary Education)

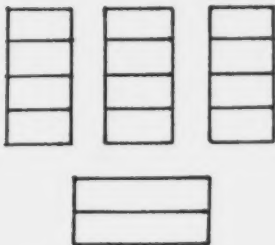
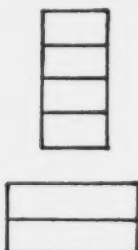
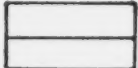


G: general (academic) education
T: technical education
A: art education
V: vocational education
F/S: further training and/or specialization
reor.: reorientation year
LQ: long qualification
SQ: short qualification
prep: Year preparatory to higher education

NOTE:

1st year «A» = common 1st year
1st year «B» = special 1st year

Figure 2. - The relation between the middle schools and the upper schools

Diagram	Description	N
	Middle schools integrated in a centre of education together with 2 or 3 upper schools, offering jointly the different forms of education (general, technical and vocational)	18
	Middle schools connected with one upper school offering - general, technical and vocational, 26 - general and technical 4	30
	- general 6 - technical and vocational education 5	11
	Geografically isolated middle schools	10

Note. Dutch-speaking Catholic S.E. 1986-87. Data provided by the statistical service of the National Secretariat of Catholic Education.